GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3567
ANSWERED ON:16.04.2002
CULTIVATION OF GENETICALLY IMPROVED CROPS
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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to permit cultivation of genetically improved varieties of crops;

(b) if so, the new BT strains approved to be cultivated in India for the first time;

(c) whether the controversy over the cultivation of BT-cotton in Gujarat is now settled;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the present estimated global areas of transgenic crops like soyabean, corn, tobacco, maize, cotton, mustard/canola, tomato, potato and any other crops, indicating the area covered against these crops in India?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

(a)& (b) : Yes, Sir. The Government has given permission for commercial cultivation of three Bt. Cotton hybrids in March, 2002 for the first time. The names of these hybrids are Bt MECH-12, Bt.MECH-162 and Bt MECH-184.

(c) & (d) : After ascertaining and establishing that M/s. Navbharat Seeds Pvt. Ltd, Ahmedabad had sold certain genetically modified Bt. Cotton hybrid seeds (Navbharat-151) without the permission, the Government of Indiafrom the Ministry of Environment & Forests had filed a case against the company before the Metropolitan Court in Ahmedabad for the violation of the provisions of Environment(Protection)Act, 1986, and the Rules-1989. The case is pending adjudication. In addition, the in-house R&D recognition accorded to the company by the Department of Science & Industrial Research of the Ministry of Science & Technology was withdrawn. Further the license for the sale of Navbharat-151 seeds was cancelled by the Government of Gujarat.

(e) : The estimated global area under transgenic crop cultivation in the year 2001 was 52.6 million hectares(approximately 130 million acres). The transgenic crops include soybean, corn, cotton, mustard/canola, tomato, potato, squash, papaya and many other crops. As of date, no transgenic crop has yet been commercially cultivated in India.